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U.S. Department of Agriculture

COMMERCIAL HATCHERY REPORT

Broadcast by E. J. Rowell, Agricultural Marketing Service, and John C. Baker, Radio Service, Thursday, May 22, 1941, in the Department of Agriculture period, National Farm and Home Hour.

--ooOoo--

BAKER:

With a goal of 15 percent more young chickens on farms by July 1, there is more than usual interest in hatchery reports issued by the Department's Marketing Service. For the highlights of the hatchery report issued yesterday afternoon, here's E. J. "Mike" Rowell of the Agricultural Marketing Service.

ROWELL:

Thanks, John. This report covers the output of commercial hatcheries during April, the number of eggs set and orders on hand. The report estimates that more than 235 million chicks were hatched during April. That's nearly 2 million more than in April of last year, but not so many as in April two years ago.

BAKER:

That isn't a very big percent increase over last year, Mike.

ROWELL:

No, John. But we mustn't forget that firms plan for big hatches to come off on Mondays, and there were five Mondays in April last year and only four this year.

BAKER:

In other words, more chicks from fewer hatches -- a higher rate of output.

ROWELL:

Yes. And the first 4 months of this year show a 17 percent increase over last year in the number of chicks hatched.

BAKER:

The Department's announcement of the drive to increase egg production was not made until April 16. That was too early to affect the number of chicks hatched during April.

ROWELL:

Yes. But since that date there has been an increasingly strong demand for chicks. Egg prices are higher than a year ago and the feed ratio is more favorable than last year and more favorable than the average for 1930 to '39.

BAKER:

Taking all these things into consideration, the defense angle - higher egg prices - more favorable feed ratio - I suppose we can look for a big output of chicks this month?

(Over)

ROWELL:

Yes, John. In spite of the occasional difficulty in getting good growth during the hot weather, the orders on hand May first were 84 percent over last year. All sections of the country show substantial increases. Our men made a special inquiry to find out about the number of eggs set during the first two weeks of May. The result showed a 36 percent increase over the same period last year. There is no doubt that hatcheries in some States are setting more eggs in May this year than in any other May in their history. The largest gains being an increase of 92 percent in the South Central States; 82 percent in the Pacific Coast States; and 57 percent in New England.

BAKER:

In other words - and to sum up - it seems pretty safe to predict that the output for May will be the largest on record for that month and that the Government program for increasing laying flocks will show some real results by the end of the month.

ROWELL:

Right!

BAKER:

Anyone who would like more details can get a copy of the report by writing to the Agricultural Marketing Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington.

ROWELL:

John -- I'd just like to add that reports from 127 hatcheries show 5 percent fewer turkey eggs set, and 9 percent fewer turkey poult hatched during April than a year ago. However, some reports show larger orders for May delivery and some hatcheries report a shortage of turkey eggs.